

**From:** Mark Nicks [ThaiFurn@aol.com ]

**Sent:** Sunday, March 18, 2007 6:42 PM

**To:** MLPAComments@resources.ca.gov

**Subject:** [MLPA Comments] Sea Urchin Fishery in Marine Protected areas.

I would like to address the urchin fisheries management pertaining to the MPA's. If you look at the population densities in every area where harvesting urchins has been curtailed or eliminated by regulations , vast barrens have been created... Looking at some of the earliest areas(Abalone pt-Newport Harbor) , Caspar Lighthouse, the habitats have been completely denuded..... as the Caspar closure area was doubled in size, the urchin barrens doubled in size.... When evaluating the urchin fisheries, and whether or not to allow it in MPA's, please take into account how utterly prolific this species is , and the negative effects to the ecosystems if they are not kept in check..... Secondly, I would like to address the kelp harvesting that will be allowed in these areas, and how the lack of scrutiny towards Kelco and their harvesting techniques allows irrefutable damage to the benthic environments where they are allowed to harvest. they do not take into consideration the impact on the surface canopy during certain times of the year when species are trying to reproduce in the top 6 feet of the kelp that is being ripped out and or mowed..... thank you, Mark Nicks -sea urchin diver since 1980